

ADDITIONAL FEE:

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R E M A R K S

The Office Action issued June 23, 2008 has been received and its contents have been carefully considered.

The applicants herein wish to thank the Examiner in charge of this application, Mr. Phillip A. Johnston, for the courtesy and cooperation he extended to applicant's counsel during the personal interview kindly granted on November 6, 2008. During this interview, Examiner Johnson and applicants' counsel discussed the issue of patentability with respect to the patents to Niehuis and Orloff et al., and the article of Van de Walle et al. The Examiner's knowledge and experience in the field of mass spectrometry was extremely helpful in this regard.

After considerable discussion, and taking into consideration (1) applicants' discovery of the relative advantages of using Bismuth, either pure metal Bismuth or a Bismuth alloy, to form a Bismuth ion cluster beam as a primary ion source (as is best represented in Fig. 2 of this

application) and (2) the importance of an emitter that can be wetted by liquid Bismuth or a Bismuth alloy, applicants' counsel agreed to amend the independent claims of this application (claims 1 and 6) to state the following:

1. That the emitter is capable of being wetted by the pure metallic Bismuth or the selected alloys of Bismuth; and

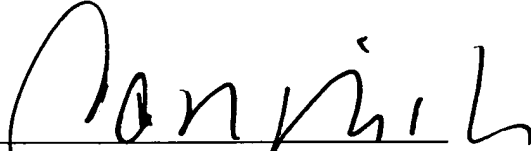
2. That the sample is bombarded with the Bismuth ion cluster to increase the efficiency of secondary ion production, relative to bombardment by gold ions.

Examiner Johnston indicated that if the claims were amended in this manner, he would give them favorable consideration.

Claims 1 and 6 have now been amended in the manner discussed at the interview. Since this application is presently under final rejection, submitted herewith is a Request for Continued Examination, together with a Petition for a three-month Extension of Time.

For the reasons given above, this application is believed to be in condition for immediate allowance. A formal Notice of Allowance is accordingly respectfully solicited.

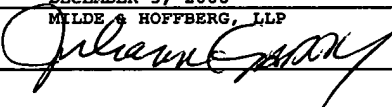
Respectfully submitted,

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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Services as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on

DECEMBER 5, 2008
MILDE & HOFFBERG, LLP
By 
Date DECEMBER 5, 2008